BISS Biodiversity Information Science and Standards

Biodiversity Information Science and Standards 2: e26226
doi: 10.3897/biss.2.26226

OPEN ACCESS

Conference Abstract

Finding the Silver Lining: Creating Positive Outcomes From Pest Problems

Nyssa Mildwaters‡, Cody Phillips‡, Lisa Yeats‡

‡ Otago Museum, Dunedin, New Zealand

Corresponding author: Nyssa Mildwaters (nyssa.mildwaters@otagomuseum.nz)

Received: 27 Apr 2018 | Published: 04 Jul 2018

Citation: Mildwaters N, Phillips C, Yeats L (2018) Finding the Silver Lining: Creating Positive Outcomes From Pest Problems. Biodiversity Information Science and Standards 2: e26226. https://doi.org/10.3897/biss.2.26226

Abstract

Pests pose a significant risk to natural science collections with appreciable resources invested in prevention, monitoring and eradication. Despite best efforts, infestations do still occur in the vast majority of museums at one time or another. Tackling these can be an expensive, time-consuming and labour-intensive undertaking that can also affect staff morale. In some circumstances, however, having to deal with infestations can have positive long-term outcomes.

In 2017, a small team of Conservation and Collection Management staff at Otago Museum were required to deal with a carpet beetle outbreak in the museum's much-loved Animal Attic gallery. The project quickly expanded in scope to include the Natural Science Dry Store. For a team of only four staff it involved significant logistical challenges and the movement of a large number of items.

Despite the challenges involved, the staff found that a number of positive Conservation and Collection Management outcomes beyond the eradication of carpet beetles also occurred. Examples were increased museum-wide staff understanding of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) strategies, improvements to gallery environmental conditions, and opportunities for the reorganisation of storage.

The planning, implementation and resolution stages of the project will be discussed, with an emphasis on how a significant risk to the museum's collection has been used to

© Mildwaters N et al. This is an open access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY 4.0), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.

improve the long-term preservation and management of the Otago Museum's Natural Science Collections.

Keywords

Integrated Pest Management, conservation, collection management

Presenting author

Nyssa Mildwaters